

CITY OF PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

NOMINATION FORM

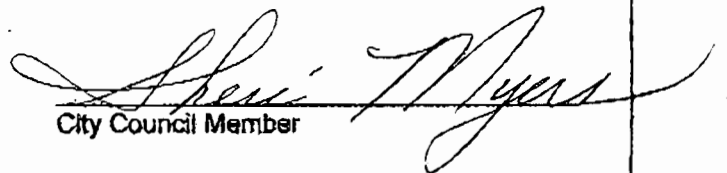
I, Sherri Myers, City Council Member, do hereby
nominate Sherri Myers for appointment by
the City Council for the position of:

PRESIDENT OF CITY COUNCIL

Provide a brief description of nominee's qualifications:

I have served on City Council
for 9 years. I served as
vice chair in 2018.

See attachment for further
comments.


City Council Member

I hereby certify that the above
nomination was submitted to my office
within the time limitations prescribed by
the Rules and Procedures of Council.


Ericka L. Burnett, City Clerk

Re: Nomination of Sherri Myers for President Pensacola City Council 2020

Date: November 21, 2019

I served as the vice president of the Pensacola City Council during the year 2018. It is the only position I have held on City Council during the 9 years I have served as a city council member.

Traditionally and presumptively, the vice president is elected to become president of the council unless the person holding the position of VP declines to serve.

While, I did not take it for granted that I would be elected president, I believe the public assumed I would become president. When the vote was cast by one deciding vote (P.C. Wu) for the current president Andy Terhaar, many were in shock. However, I wasn't shocked or surprised for many reasons as set forth in this memorandum.

P.C. Wu, who had served as council president in the past, and held other positions such as chair of the CRA (nominated by me), wanted to be president of the council in 2019 as evidenced by the fact that he nominated himself for president, and he was the lone vote for himself. (Attachment nomination and vote tally). Nominated for vice president were Andy Terhaar and P.C. Wu. (Andy Terhaar had previously served as the council president in 2015.) I nominated P.C. Wu for vice president for 2019. When the first vote for president was cast, I received 3 votes and Andy Terhaar received 3 votes. P.C. Wu voted for himself. On the second round of voting P.C. Wu knew that he was the swing vote and he would decide the outcome, he said as much. P.C. Wu voted for Andy Terhaar for president. After, the vote P.C. Wu leaned toward me and said, "Don't worry, you will be on council another four years and have a chance to be president". I didn't respond. I walk out of the council chambers.

So, why did P.C. Wu vote for Andy Terhaar? The answer is pretty straight forward; with Andy Terhaar in the president's seat there would be no opposition for P.C. Wu to be vice president – he would get it unopposed by acclamation which is exactly what happened. P.C. Wu assumed he would move up from vice president to president in 2020. However, his move to position himself as president when he runs for his seat in 2020 set the stage to change that presumption as evidenced by the fact that I did not become president.

What happened to me was not fair. It happen because there isn't a process for removing politics, lobbying, self-serving, and personal biases for the process. For

years, I have advocated for a process that rotates the president and vice president based on districts. A rotation of districts will eliminate actions taken for political or personal reasons that result in unfairness.

In my case, I think the larger issues is not just P.C. Wu's self-serving actions, but rather the realities of cultural attitudes, male dominance, sexism and misogyny that women in public life encounter, both subtle and blatant.

Serving on city council has not been an easy ride for me beginning with my first successful run for city council. My first encounter with my endurance race as a public official began when I announced I was running for the District 2 seat held by Sam Hall who decided to vacate the seat and run at large. Shortly, after my announcement in 2010, Councilman Hall called me up and gave me the good news that he thought I would win "because you have the best looking tits in Pensacola". I won, not because of my body parts, but because of my message. However, I was soon to learn that my message was not welcomed by city council, especially by three councilmen, namely Sam Hall, Brian Spencer and Larry Johnson. The three would often walk out in unison when I was speaking. Larry Johnson even put his hands over his ears one time when I was speaking. Johnson attempted to have me removed from city council. Johnson recruited a person to run against me during my second term and personally sent out urgent letters and e-mails to raise money to ensure I didn't serve a second term. In his fund raising messages he characterized me in the typical medieval misogynist and sexist terms as a disruptive women. In 2018, Johnson sarcastically nomination me for council president describing me misogynistically as a controlling female. Several years ago, I said something P.C. Wu didn't like and he leaned over to me and whispered, "One of these days I am going to unload on you". That statement made me very uncomfortable, especially coming from a man. When Rusty Wells served as the city council executive director he drafted amendments to the charter which allows the council to hire its own staff. In the charter amendments drafted by Wells it refers to the council's assistant attorney as "him". This is inappropriate language to use in the charter of a city. The charter should be amended to use gender neutral language. The fact that the charter refers to a charter position as "him" is indicative of systemic sexism within the halls of government.

While I was writing this memorandum, I asked a male friend why men on city council thought they could disrespect me. He responded "because that is how women are treated in the nation's capital" I certainly believe leadership impacts

how people behave. It is always about power. I am not a powerful person. I am not wealthy. I am not connect to any of Pensacola's well connected and powerful. I don't have a pedigree. I am not connected to a powerful man. I am just an old woman – mostly it was old women punished as witches in medieval times for talking or gossiping. Not too much different today except society doesn't put a Scold's Bridle on us or burn us at the stakes.

Why I am writing all of this now? Simple, the herstory of women who struggle in the halls of political power needs to be told and made part of an official record. I write this for all women, past and present and future, whose voices have not been heard, and for those who have been silenced.

*Note: As to Brian Spencer, over the years Brian treated me with respect and I believe we became friends. I will always remember his thoughtful words of comfort and he made me laugh.